



"Not for self"

Oswestry Rural Parish Council

Minutes

of the Ordinary meeting

held at 7 pm on Thursday 29 February 2024 at Trefonen Village Hall

Present:

Cllr Peter Richardson (Acting Chairman), Cllr. Bob Kimber, Cllr Martin Jones, Cllr. Steve Watts, Cllr Peter Davies, Cllr Jaz Singh

Clerk to the Council:

Kathryn Lloyd

In attendance:

Approximately four members of the public

1883 Chairman's Welcome

Cllr Peter Richardson welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised he was the acting Chairman in Cllr Martin Bennett's absence. He advised members Cllr Bennett continues to be unwell and wished him a speedy recovery.

1884 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from:

Cllr Martin Bennett

Cllr Iain Campbell

Cllr Paul Milner

Cllr Mike Weston

Cllr Chris Woods

Cllr Joyce Barrow

Cllr Peter Richardson requested the variation of the agenda by bringing item 14 forward to item 3. Members **AGREED** to this request.

1885 Co Option Application

Cllr Peter Richardson invited Mr William Jones to present himself to members. He gave an introduction as to where he grew up and that he is currently studying part-time in Derby. In terms of his application, he felt he could provide a perspective from the youth and a different viewpoint on emerging issues. Cllr Peter Richardson advised that members met on the last Thursday of the month and asked whether he had sufficient time to devote to the work of the Parish Council. Mr William Jones felt he was able to commit as he was only attending his course on a part-time basis.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED to elect Mr Williams Jones to the role of Councillor for the Morda & Sweeney Ward. There was one abstention. Cllr Peter Richardson invited Cllr William Jones to join the meeting by sitting with the other members present.

1886 Police Report

a) Cllr Peter Richardson advised members PCSO Charlie Ironmonger had sent his apologies for not being able to attend the Parish Council meeting and read the latest Police report provided by Oswestry Rural North Safer Neighbourhood Team.

03/01/2024 – Single vehicle Road Traffic Collision on Morda Road.

04/01/2024 – Suspicious Circumstances with 2 vehicles seen driving around Morda. No reports of Burglaries etc the following day.

06/01/2024 – Anti-Social Behaviour.

24/01/2024 – 2 vehicle Road Traffic Collision. Non-Injury.

Highways Incident – 1

Domestic – 6

Other – 11

Assault – 2

Criminal Damage – 2

b) Lack of Policing on Low Level Crime Locally

Cllr Martin Jones raised concerns with the lack of local policing on low level crime. He read the Policing Pledge for the UK setting out the standard of service which can be expected. He noted the 999 response time was under 50%. He commented that people should expect not to be treated as a stable revenue source (cash cows) through speeding offences or speed training courses. He believes early intervention by the Police at lower threshold is needed and provided examples of offences occurring locally .

The PCC newsletter stated Band D properties would see an increase of £280 a year for policing (5%). Improving visibility, access , better investigations and outcoming and increased public contact. He also noted the police would call time on retail crime although in Shrewsbury and Oswestry there are vigilante groups trying to stop shop lifting.

He noted the lack of attendance by the Police for this evening's meeting and expressed thoughts that the Police attending outside of Oswestry had little knowledge of the local area or issues. There is a lot of agriculture crime and low level drugs in rural areas. Early intervention and presence is paramount and low level crime must be taken seriously.

1887 Shropshire Council Report

Cllr Peter Richardson read the following report on behalf of Cllr Joyce Barrow

“The Council will have an overspend at the end of the year and will need to use its reserves, leaving an estimating two million pounds. Dangerously low. Sixty two million of saving need to be made by the end of the financial year. We will continue to look after and protect the most vulnerable in our society (adult social care/children's services)

In the budget savings, two recycling centres, will close. Those that remain open, will be only available to residents of Shropshire. At the moment, it is used by residents of Powys, Wrexham etc, whose authorities charge.

There will be a charge for green waste.

Some libraries will close. Some leisure centres/swimming pools will close.

As previously mentioned, there will be 300 full time job losses, as well as a large number of part time losses.

The council tax rate will be 4.9%”

Cllr Bob Kimber questioned why £6.2m was being sent on Consultants on how the Council can save money. There is a proposal of stopping transport for children with special needs. Cllr Martin Jones commented last month a Councillor had stated Shropshire Council would build a £25m leisure centre / swimming facilities.

He commented £10m had been spent on Mile end on a bridge and now there is going to be a shutting down of amenities. Cllr Peter Davies thought fly tipping in the countryside would increase with the closure of two recycling facilities.

1888 Public Participation

A representative from the Shropshire Union Canal Society thanked the Parish Council for its previous contribution towards the restoration works of the canal . He advised a stone pathway at Crickheath had been completed and volunteers had undertaken work over the Kings Coronation weekend. National Grid had donated money for the planting of hedgerow and Regional Prosperity money (match funding) has been received which will pay for the lining and preparation of the canal. The School House bridge should open shortly once work on a number of minor fixes is completed. There will also be the work in the future to link up the two missing miles of canal with Llanymynech.

1889 Minutes

The minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Parish Council held on 25 January 2024 were considered for approval. **It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED that the minutes be APPROVED and ADOPTED as a true record. There was one abstention.**

1890 Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests

In accordance with Section 29 of the Localism Act 2011 Members were informed they are personally responsible for deciding whether they should disclose an interest at this meeting. Members were also reminded they should not make decisions with a closed mind and must declare a bias and not vote on matters where their decision could be pre-determined.

None declared

1891 Dispensations

None requested.

1892 Declarations of Acceptance of Gifts and Hospitality

None Declared

1893 Planning Matters

a) Planning Decisions

The following planning decisions were **NOTED**: There was one abstention.

Planning Application Details	Planning Proposals
23/05383/VAR Trefonen C Of E School, School Lane, Trefonen, Oswestry, Shropshire, SY10 9DY	Variation of Condition No. 2 attached to planning permission 10/01130/FUL dated 17 May 2010 to allow for the retention of the Childrens Nursery Demountable accommodation for a further temporary period of ten years. Decision: Grant Permission
23/04909/FUL Accommodation At, The Drift House, Croesau Bach, Shropshire, SY10 9BG	Change of Use from Holiday Let to a Dwelling. Decision: Grant Permission
23/05473/CPE Warehouse Known As Unit 2, The Barns, Woolston, West Felton, Shropshire, SY10 8HY	Application for a Certificate of Existing Lawful Use for the use of building and yard for B8 storage. Decision: Certificate - Not Lawful

b) Planning Applications

The following planning applications were considered for comment

Planning Application Details	Planning Proposals
24/00279/FUL The Elms, Middleton, Oswestry, Shropshire, SY11 4LT	Erection of a covered silage store and all associated works. Members wished to know what the requirement is for the silage, how it will be used, what livestock it would support and where. It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED to object on the basis this is not a silage storage but an expansion of the biomass industry .
24/00445/FUL Trefarclawdd Farm, Trefarclawdd, Oswestry, Shropshire, SY10 9DE	Covering of a consented slurry separator Cllr Martin Jones advised members an email had been received to report an incident concerning slurry pollution from the farm. He read this to members. Seven River Trust have been copied in together with the local MP and the Environmental Agency contacted. Cllr Iain Campbell has also reported water pollution as a result of testing. It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED not to comment
23/05465/FUL 9 Kingfisher Way, Morda, Shropshire, SY10 9PB	Extension to side and rear of dwelling. Cllr Steve Watts advised members he had reviewed this application. There have been no comments or objection on the planning portal. It was PROPOSED SECONDED and AGREED not to comment
24/00441/TPO Land Opposite Acorns, Waen Lane , Maesbury Marsh, Oswestry, Shropshire, SY10 8JD	To remove branches and dead wood overhanging the property 'Acorns' (approx. 10 percent reduction) from 1no. Oak protected by the Shropshire Council (Land adjacent to Waen Lane, Maesbury Marsh, Shropshire) TPO 2015 (SC/00235/15) Cllr Martin Jones commented the property had been built in the wrong place, in the wrong direction and has the wrong access. There are a further three properties yet to be built. . The Parish Council has a long history of not supporting the cutting down of ancient trees which have been in situ long before any the property development. This should not be supported and should be strongly objected to. It was PROPOSED,SECONDED and AGREED to object to this application.
24/00616/SCO Vyrnwy Frankton Project, OS REFERENCE: 335250 - 332585	Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Opinion FOR INFORMATION ONLY - Members NOTED this.
24/00681/OHL Trefarclawdd Farm, Trefarclawdd, Oswestry, Shropshire, SY10 9DE	Installation of an additional wooden pole into an existing overhead power line It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED not to comment.

NOTE: Planning applications not listed above that are received after the issue of this agenda and included on Shropshire Council's website will also be considered to meet response timeframes.

Planning Application Details	Planning Proposals
24/00761/FUL The Coppie, Woolston, West Felton, Oswestry, Shropshire.	Erection of part two storey and part single storey extension Cllr Martin Jones advised members he had viewed this application on the planning portal and there were no objections or comments. He felt this was not imposing or would cause an obstruction. It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED to support this application.
24/00645/FUL Pen-Y-Dyffryn Hall Hotel, Rhydycroesau, Oswestry, Shropshire, SY10 7JD	Single Storey Side Extension To Form Dining Room Cllr Peter Richardson expressed this thoughts this would be a good addition and should be endorsed. IT was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED to support this application.

1894 Clerk's Report

Members **NOTED** a written report from the Clerk on action taken following decisions made at previous council meetings. Cllr Martin Jones asked whether funds had been set aside for HGV signage at Aston. The Clerk confirmed £3,000 had been set in the 2024/25 budget. Members **AGREED** for items 1606, 1796, 1796d and 1804 to be removed from the report. Cllr Martin Jones requested a print off of the planning leaflets. The Clerk confirmed that a letter and grant application was offered to a Trustee of Morda and Sweeney Village Hall at a meeting on 28 February 2024 and this had been refused.

1895 Financial Matters

Members considered for approval income and expenditure from January 2024, I & E Balances to date, and financial outturn position to 31 March 2024. The Clerk advised two minor changes had been made since finance papers had been issued. A slight increase on mileage and a reduction on postage charges.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED that the income and expenditure to 31 January 2024 and the balance of income received to date of £56,119.64 and gross expenditure to date of £57,878.64 be APPROVED.

Members **NOTED** the financial outturn position for 2023/24

b)Bank Reconciliation

Members considered for approval the bank reconciliation at 31 January 2024.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED that the bank reconciliation statement to the 31 January 2024 be APPROVED.

c)Payments for February 2024

Members considered for approval the following provisional payments for February 2024:

Supplier	Details	Total £
EE Limited	Monthly Mobile Charge 11 November - 11 December 2023	13.73
HSBC	Bank Charges 29 December 2023 to 30 January 2024	8.00
Mark Evans	Bus Shelter Cleaning 1 February 2024 (Morda, The Terrace, Trefonen, Treflach)	60.00
Colin Turner	Bus Shelter Cleaning February 2024	25.00
Kathryn Lloyd (The Clerk)	Clerk's pay and allowances February 2024	1,533.78
HMRC	PAYE / NI Clerk Pay February 2024	286.65
EDG Ltd T/A Water Treatment Services	Water Testing -Samples, certificate and courier collection February 2024	318.00
Kathryn Lloyd (The Clerk)	Reimbursement - Agenda & associated documents February 2024 and incorrect postage on Tender received	18.30
Kathryn Lloyd (The Clerk)	Reimbursement - envelopes C5 and C4 £2.50 *3	7.50
Total		2,270.96

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED that the provisional payments for February 2024 be APPROVED.

d. The Clerk requested the removal of Cllr John Davies as signatory on the Parish Council's Unity Trust Bank account.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED for Cllr John Davies to be removed as a signatory on the Parish Council's Unity Trust Bank account.

Members considered the appointment of a Councillor to fill the Finance vacancy. Members **AGREED** to defer the appoint with a view to consider any future applicants who may have requisite experience.

e. Cllr Peter Richardson advised members a number of website updates incorporating tabs for approved minutes and Environmental Working Group were required. The Clerk confirmed a cost of £90 excluding VAT . **It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED to APPROVE these update and charges.**

f. Members **NOTED** a copy of the approved budget 2024/25

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED to NOTE the approved budget for 2024/25.

1896 Resignation and Vacancies

- a. Members **NOTED** the resignation of Cllr Roger Jones on 5 February 2024 and agreed for a letter of thanks to be sent for his contribution towards the work of the Parish Council.
- b) Members **AGREED** for the Clerk to advertise the vacancy in Sychtyn in accordance with current legislation and Best Practice. The Clerk confirmed this would be as a casual vacancy via Shropshire Council. Details of the process have been sent previously to members.
- c) Members considered the appointment of a Councillor to the Road Safety Working Group and Environmental Working Group as a result of the two vacancies caused by the resignation of Cllr Roger Jones. Members **AGREED** to defer this item to next month.

1897 Grant Policy

Members considered the revised Grant Policy which incorporated the changes agreed by members at the meeting held on 25 January 2024. These had been highlighted in yellow. Cllr Martin Jones pointed out the potential for the Parish Council to recoup grant funds not wholly used.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED to accept the revised Grant Policy incorporating changes agreed by members at the meeting held on 25 January 2024.

1898 Grant Application query by Morton Playing Field Committee

Cllr Peter Richardson advised members an email from the Chairperson of Morton Playing Field Committee had been received requesting the reasons for refusing an award of grant following the submission of an application for £1,500. Cllr Peter stated this had been discussed at length at the January meeting and the decision reached was based on it being considered an annual maintenance allowance rather than a grant. The amended Grant Policy limited grant awards to £500, apart for exceptional circumstances. This is to allow six different application to be considered. The Parish Council has no responsibility for this field and is aware most playing fields charge for usage which is then used to contribute towards annual maintenance costs. Sometime ago, the Parish Council offered to take ownership and maintenance responsibility for the field, but this had been declined. Members **AGREED** for the Clerk to send a response to the Chairperson of Morton Playing Field Committee stating the above and confirming no change in its decision.

1899 Environment Working Group

Water Pollution / Trefarclawdd Farm

Cllr Martin Jones provided an update to members on the water pollution tests copies of which had been sent out. A third set of tests along the River Morda had been undertaken and despite being heavily diluted the water pollution results were excessively high and again did not meet the bathing water quality standard. Cllr Martin Jones advised members that Cllr Iain Campbell had contacted the Environmental Agency with the regard to the ditch at Trefarclawdd Farm and heavy pollution from the water pollution test results.

Cllr Martin Jones advised he had received an email from Freedom Fibre concerning the roll out of fibre network across North Shropshire. Wayleaves and permission to work agreements give access to peoples' land and pylons can be built. He has objected to this previously and encourages people to lobby their MP.

Cllr Peter Davies commented that if the stream is polluted all the way down, it should be tested at various points to determine when the water was clean. Cllr Martin Jones advised it had been tested at source and found to be polluted. Up Sewage Creek have advised that almost all water courses are polluted at source beyond the legal level. In Shropshire, water pollution is caused by 50% farm run off and 50 % sewage. There are two spare tests available each month so if Cllr Peter Davies suggests a location, he would like testing this will be undertaken (location by "what three words).

c) Vyrnwy Frankton Connection

No update

1900 Coed y Go Speed Reduction Scheme

Cllr Peter Richardson advised members that an email had been received from the CIL / Section 106 Team at Shropshire Council asking for the Parish Council's view on whether to continue with the Coed y Go speed reduction scheme at the end of the Public Consultation period given the Police will be unable to enforce the speed limit. Cllr Peter Richardson reminded members that the West Midlands Constabulary objected to the speed limit, stating it would not enforce the 40mph speed limit through Coed y Go. The Clerk confirmed the Parish Council had contributed £8k of Community Infrastructure Levy funding to the design stage.

Cllr Martin Jones advised members the Police & Crime Commissioners and Safer Neighbourhood team talk held at Kinnerley, John Campion stated he would actively support traffic calming measures and speed reduction areas . This is also one of his top priorities for North Shropshire.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED to continue with the scheme.

1901 Oswestry Area Committee

Cllr Peter Richardson advised members he had attend the Oswestry Area Committee meeting. This was a short meeting due to a lack of members in attendance.

1902 Correspondence

a)Cllr Peter Richardson advised members a request had been received from a Morda resident requesting support for traffic calming measure along Kingfisher Way . Cllr Steve Watts advised members he was surprised by speeding given the stretch of road in question is no more than 100m long with a bend at either end. If speeding is an issue now it is likely to get worse given Kingfisher Way is a Cul de Sac. With the new housing estate being built in the middle ,Ashes Road and Kingfisher Way will connect at some stage. Cllr Martin Jones suggested speeding is by the residents that live there.

b)Members **NOTED** the Shropshire Council Medium Term Financial Strategy and Budget 2024/25 proposals.

c)The Clerk advised that Councillor Martin Bennett in his capacity as Chairman has been nominated to attend the Buckingham Palace Garden Party on 8 May 2024.

1903 Consultations

None

1904 Date for Next Meeting

Members **NOTED** the next meeting will place on Thursday 28 March 2024 at Trefonen Village Hall

PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960

Pursuant to Section 1(2) of the above Act and due to the confidential nature of the following business to be transacted it was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED that the public and press should not be present.

1905 Planning Enforcement

Cllr Peter Richardson read two Planning Enforcement cases which have been reported. Members **NOTED** these.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting at 8.09 pm

Signed: _____
Chairman

Date: _____